

MASSACHUSETTS RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANTS

SNOWBERRY

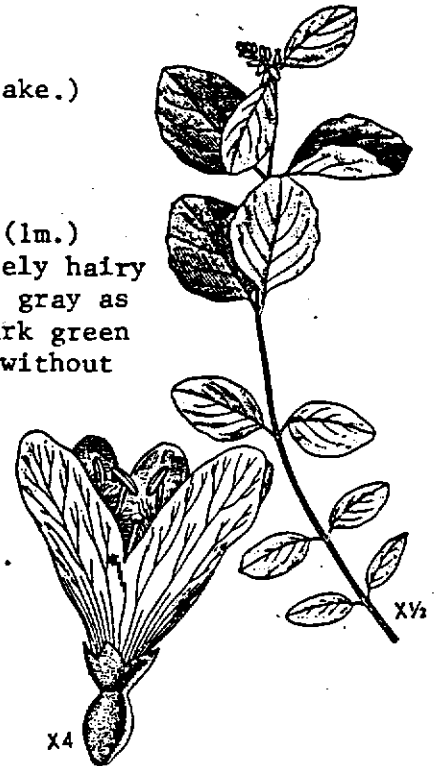
(*Symphoricarpos albus* var. *albus* (L.) Blake.)

DESCRIPTION

Snowberry is a low, bushy shrub, usually less than 3.5' (1m.) high and forms dense thickets. The branchlets are minutely hairy in var. *albus*; at first light brown, turning purplish to gray as it matures. The bark becomes shredded with age. The dark green leaves are opposite, simple (without teeth), sessile or without stalk, elliptic to oblong, and $\frac{1}{2}$ -2" (1-5cm.) long; $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1-3cm.) wide. The pinkish-white, bell-shaped flowers occur in small terminal clusters. Flowers appear from June to July. The conspicuous fruit is round, white, and spongy, with a dark spot at the end. Fruits appear from August to September and often remain through winter.

SIMILAR SPECIES IN MASSACHUSETTS

The ornamental snowberry (*S. albus* var. *laevigatus*) is occasionally found escaped to roadsides. Its twigs and leaves are smooth, not hairy. It is a native of western North America. Morrow Honeysuckle (*Lonicera morrowii*), another introduced shrub, is now thoroughly established on roadsides, damp thickets, rocky slopes, etc. Its flowers are creamy-white with curled back petals. They turn yellow-orange with age. Morrow Honeysuckle is ordinarily 3-6' (1-2m.) high, but small plants closely resemble Snowberry.

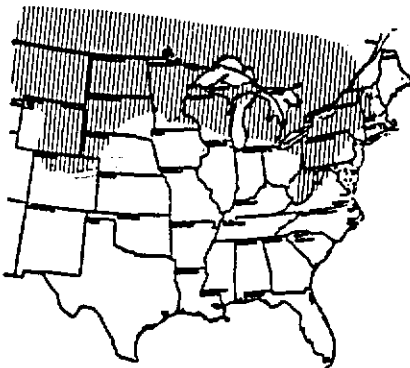


Cleason, R.A. The New Britton and Brown Illustrated Flora of the Northeastern U.S. and Adjacent Canada. New York Botanical Garden, 1932.

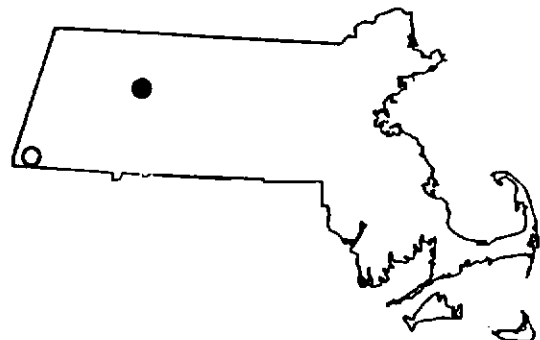
HABITAT IN MASSACHUSETTS

Snowberry inhabits dry, open, very steep, sandstone slopes. Co-occurring species include *Andropogon scoparius* (Little Bluestem), *Deschampsia flexuosa* (Common Hair grass), and *Danthonia spicata* (Poverty Grass).

(continued overleaf)



Distribution of Snowberry



● Verified since 1978
○ Reported prior to 1978

Distribution in Massachusetts by Town

SNOWBERRY (continued)

RANGE

Snowberry ranges from Quebec to British Columbia, south to western Massachusetts, western Virginia, north to Ohio, west to northern Colorado, eastern Wyoming, and Montana.

POPULATION STATUS

Snowberry is considered "Endangered" in Massachusetts. One current occurrence (1978 to present) and one historical occurrence (prior to 1978) have been recorded. This species is rare due to the lack of dry, open, calcareous slopes here at the eastern edge of its range.